Remarks

Amendments to the Claims

Independent claims 1, 6, and 9 have been amended to more clearly define the invention recited in them. Each of these claims has been amended to recite that the electrolytically colored, anodized aluminum article (or surface, as the claim states) is subjected to its heating step before the colored surface is exposed to color-degrading ultraviolet light. The whole thrust of this application is to stabilize a newly colored anodized layer before the color is degraded by ultraviolet radiation.

The Background section of the specifications states that colored anodized surfaces fade during exposure to UV light (paragraphs 0004 and 0005). The Summary of the Invention (paragraphs 0006-0009) teaches that the heating is done following deposition of the coloring particles in the pores of the anodized coating to stabilize the color finishes. The heating is done on the "newly formed article" to later reduce unwanted color change due to exposure to sunlight or other UV radiation. After anodization of an aluminum surface and subsequent electrolytic coloring, the surface is to be protected after such processing. Thus, in accordance with the invention the heating is done to stabilize the colored anodized surface before it is degraded by UV light.

Such a practice is not taught or suggested by the references cited by the Examiner.

The Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 6, 7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brugger (4,209,569) in view of Junkel (5,392,695).

Claims 2-5 and 8 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brugger in view of Junkel as applied to claims 1, 6, 7 and 9 above, and further in view of Jozefowicz (5,277,982) and Nitowski et al (5,324,587).

It is respectfully requested that each of these rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn for the following reasons.

Reasons for Allowance of Claims 1-9

The rejection of claims 1, 6, 7, and 9 over Brugger in view of Junkel is based on the likelihood that the Brugger aluminum baking form will eventually be heated in a baking oven. The Brugger baking pan is formed of aluminum sheet material and has its internal and external surfaces anodized and colored black by electrolytic coloring with tin or silver compounds. The surfaces are colored black so that they will absorb and transmit infrared radiation in a baking oven. Junkel discloses that a bread making machine may experience temperatures of 350°F for prolonged periods during bread making.

Brugger, of course, discloses nothing about stabilizing the black color of his baking form against degradation by UV radiation. Brugger is not worried about whether his pans are exposed to sunlight before they enter an oven. They could be exposed to UV radiation indefinitely and could still be sufficiently black to absorb and transmit infrared radiation.

Thus Brugger, the primary reference in the rejection of each of claims 1-9 contains no teaching of a need to protect an electrolytically colored anodized coating from degradation by UV radiation. Nor does Brugger teach or suggest any process for doing accomplishing this result.

The purpose of applicants' invention is to preserve the visual quality of a colored anodized aluminum article. Each of applicants' claims 1-9 requires that electrolytically colored, anodized surfaces be stabilized against UV degradation before they are exposed to such degradation. None of Brugger, Junkel, Jozefowicz, Nitowski et al, or any combination of them is suggestive of applicants heating practice for the color stabilization of electrolytically colored, anodized coatings on aluminum articles. Applicants' claimed methods are applicable using known aluminum alloys and known anodizing and electrolytic coloring practices. But such prior art does not teach or suggest that such colored surfaces can be color-stabilized against UV radiation by a timely heating step following the electrolytic coloring of an anodized aluminum alloy surface.

It is respectfully requested that each of the above rejections of applicants' claims be reconsidered. Claims 1-9 should be allowed and the case passed to issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is, on the date shown below, being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on: 12/27/05.

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